FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES TO WATCH

Greenville Independent School District (ISD) Afterschool Centers of Education (ACE) Project

Greenville Independent School District (ISD) Afterschool Centers of Education (ACE) Project	
Urbanicity: Rural **Location:** Greenville, Texas **Grades:** K-12 **21st CCLC Enrollment:** 1,110	**Percentage of All Students Eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch:** 68% **Demographics:** Asian: 1%, African American: 17%, Native American: <1%, White: 35%, Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity: 42%, Multi Race: 4% **Hours of 21st CCLC Program Operation:** Monday through Friday, 3-6:45 p.m.

Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships Opportunity Conditions Addressed
Process Conditions: Linked to Learning Relational Developmental Collaborative Interactive **Organizational Conditions:** Systemic Integrated Sustained

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES TO WATCH

Greenville Independent School District (ISD) Afterschool Centers of Education (ACE) Project

No-Tech and High-Tech Strategies to Support Family Engagement

At Greenville Independent School District Afterschool Centers of Education, communication with families is multi-faceted and dynamic. Communication strategies include face-to-face events at the campuses during and after program hours, Saturday events, an ACE Guidebook and Parent Handbook, a staff directory, a calendar of events for the year, and hours of operation at each campus.

Bus Road-eo

With Bus Road-eo, housebound parents are greeted by program staff. Several times a year, ACE Site Coordinators, the family engagement specialist, and the project director ride the bus with students to introduce themselves to families and hand out appreciation bags for families as the students exit the bus. The bags include important information about upcoming events, program contacts, and a snack. The Bus Road-eos target families rarely seen on campus. The Bus Road-eos are more than an investment of time and a kind gesture; they reinforce children's and families' sense of connectedness to staff, the program, and the school.

Parent Information Table (PIT)

An activity engagement aide staffs the Parent Information Table daily to help families sign out their children. The activity engagement aide also serves as a way to engage families more frequently. Families are always greeted with a smile and the PIT staff on all campuses are beloved.

Community Partners

Greenville ISD ACE also brings in organizational partners on a monthly basis. These partners are well received by families and provide student and family services including how to sign up for counseling, free or reduced cost dental care, and other services.

Cold Calls-Warm Hearts

ACE's Cold Calls-Warm Hearts practice focuses on reaching middle and high school families who may not

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES TO WATCH

Greenville Independent School District (ISD) Afterschool Centers of Education (ACE) Project

be physically present on campus. High school site coordinators make cold calls every day to families to simply check in, say hello, and share an uplifting update or reflection about a child. In the past year, staff began tracking calls and were surprised by the number of parent phone calls they made.

Social Media

Social media is another way to communicate with and hear from families who are not easy to reach through other methods. ACE uses Facebook to post and provide access to interactive campus contests. Facebook competitions between ACE sites are friendly and increase traffic to their Facebook sites. The Facebook page displays relevant data for parents including attendance, grades, activities, and upcoming events. In addition, classrooms are displayed via video and photos. Student-created cartoons that connect with the program's social skill curriculum are regularly uploaded.

Leadership Models Family Engagement

"We wanted Facebook to be a huge connection to parents and community members. The best way for me to implement it was to do it myself, and now people are starting to jump in. I was the one taking photos with my own phone, and now people are jumping on and using cameras much more sophisticated than mine," says Johanna Friedel, ACE Project Director. She compares the site's impressive work with communication to its family engagement at-large.

> *"Leadership has to set the tone. It's the same way with family engagement. Staff leaders have to jump out there all the time to connect with families. You can't put everything on the family engagement person."*
>
> *"Helping the students in ACE gives me a reason to get out of bed. Helping these kids gives me a purpose."*
>
> *"This program is essential to our family"*
>
> *"Congratulations son. Love you con todo mis corazon."*
>
> *— Parent postings on the Greenville ISD Texas ACE Project*

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES TO WATCH

Greenville Independent School District (ISD) Afterschool Centers of Education (ACE) Project

TIPS FOR PROMISING PRACTICES

- Target middle and high school families for positive calls home regarding students.

- Every person affiliated with the program is an ambassador for family engagement. Every interaction should help families feel welcome.

SEVEN TIPS FOR STAFF MEMBERS USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO SUPPORT FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

1. **Make sure all parents know the importance of posting pictures and videos to promote and sustain the program.**

- Talk to families directly about permission.
- Provide an opt-out option.
- Adhere to school and site protocols.

2. **Program directors must take the initial lead and model how the site will use social media.**

- Create content examples.
- Designate a small group to post.
- Develop a vision with families and staff.

3. **Include data, videos, pictures, contests, pertinent information, and reminders for families, as well as links, resources, and partner events.**

4. **When putting up new posts, send links to families as well as superintendents, principals, state leaders, contractors, and community partners.**

5. **Thank parents, staff, and community partners publicly on social media.**

6. **Featuring popular people, such as a community ambassador or staff person, will bring more parents to your site and create a family friendly online community.**

7. **Ask people to share your site.**

This can include:

Local media outlets / School district communication departments / Partner organizations

---